



Subject: *2023 Tourism Grant Applications*
To: Parks, Recreation and Culture Committee
Date Prepared: March 15, 2023
Related Motions: N/A
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Approved by: Alana Tapper, Director of Parks, Recreation & Culture

Summary

This report brings forward Tourism Grant funding recommendations for the 2023 season. Four applications were received by the February 28, 2023 deadline. The applications were reviewed by the Staff Grant Review Committee and were all found to be eligible under the Tourism Grant Policy.

The approved Tourism Grant budget for the 2023/24 fiscal year is \$40,000 and the total amount requested by the four groups is \$33,900.

Financial Impact Statement

The approved Tourism Grant budget for the 2023/2024 fiscal year is \$40,000 and the total amount requested by the four groups is \$33,900. Based on review by the Staff Grant Review Committee, the recommended funding amount is \$33,900.

Recommendation

That the Parks, Recreation and Culture Committee recommend to Council that the Tourism Grant funding recommendations be approved as outlined in the staff report.

Recommended Motion

Move that the Parks, Recreation and Culture Committee recommends to Council that the Tourism Grant funding recommendations totaling \$33,900 be approved for the following organizations:

- *East Hants Historical Society - \$5,000*
- *Maitland District Development Association - \$17,000*
- *Walton Area Development Association - \$3,900*
- *CHart Society - \$8,000 (with \$800 held back pending completion of Sundial project)*

And that staff release approved funds as confirmation of external funding sources for proposed projects are received from each group.

Background

The Tourism Grant program provides single-year financial support to non-profit community-based organizations whose purpose is to operate a tourism attraction or facility in East Hants with a focus on attracting visitors from local, national and international markets. Funding from this program supports tourism-related projects designed to protect and enhance community identity, values and experiences. All applications are evaluated using criteria below, based on both merit and need:

- The project should represent a traditional or established tourism attraction or activity.
- The project must have a reasonable, viable budget and demonstrate support from the community and other levels of government.
- There should be an established precedent for support approval for the type of project.
- There should be a direct relationship between the tourism sector and the project, attraction or activity.

All applications are reviewed by the Staff Grant Review Committee to ensure they align with the Tourism Grant Policy, the East Hants Tourism Strategy, and the East Hants Strategic Plan.

Discussion

The four applications received were reviewed by the Staff Grant Review Committee and were all found to be eligible under the Tourism Grant Policy.

Expenses identified in the *Pending Funding* column in the table below are tentative funding streams from external sources, namely from the Canada Summer Jobs program. Per Tourism Grant policy, the requested Tourism Grant funds should only be disbursed once staff have received confirmation that all external funding has been approved. If any projects are not able to be completed because external funding has not been received, the applicants may choose to come back to Council to request a change in the scope of their application.

Applicant	Program/Project Description	Requested Funding	Pending External Funding
CHart Society	- Roadside promotional sign for events - Advertising costs (social media, posters, videos) - Website improvements - Event costs (artist payments, supplies) - <i>Signage for a proposed sundial located at Dawson Dowell Park*</i>	\$8,000	\$5,964.81 (Canada Summer Jobs)
East Hants Historical Society	- Funds for staffing in September at the Lower Selma Museum - A portion of insurance costs	\$5,000	N/A
Maitland District Development Association	- Staffing costs for Gallery 215 - Marketing and promotion of Gallery 215 and Beyond the Wharf Artisans - Hands-on workshop experiences - Improving online presence - A portion of insurance costs	\$17,000	\$4,000 (Canada Summer Jobs)
Walton Area Development Association	- Funds for 9 week student staffing at the Walton Lighthouse - NS Webcam fee	\$3,900	\$6,250 (Canada Summer Jobs)
Totals		\$33,900	

* Staff Grant Review Committee recommends withholding \$800 in funding for the Dawson Dowell sundial project until forthcoming agreements are in place and the sundial has been installed.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

The objective of the Tourism Grant is to assist community organizations with projects that protect and enhance community identity. This aligns with the strong community key strategy within the 2021-2024 East Hants Strategic Plan as the tourism opportunities help showcase what the area has to offer, creating a sense of pride and place felt by community members. Supporting tourism opportunities also enriches the quality of life for both residents and visitors attracted to the area. This grant program also aligns with the East Hants Tourism Strategy, which aims to enhance the overall environment for the tourism industry and work to attract visitors to this region of Nova Scotia.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The approved Tourism Grant budget for the 2023/2024 fiscal year is \$40,000 and the total amount requested by the four groups is \$33,900. As the total amounts requested do not exceed the amount budgeted, and all applications were found to be complete and met eligibility requirements, staff are recommending the requests be awarded in full. Staff also recommend withholding \$800 from the CHart Society grant, which can be released upon completion of the Sundial project in Dawson Dowell Park (pending forthcoming agreements and installation).

Supporting these non-profit tourism operators stimulates tourism spending especially in East Hants' rural communities. Financial statements submitted by last year's recipients reflected approximately \$80,000 in visitor spending at the various sites operated by grant recipients.

Alternatives

1. That the Parks, Recreation and Culture Committee recommend to Council alternate Tourism Grant funding amounts be awarded to the listed organizations.
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